

# Exciter

Raleigh Amateur Radio Society



FEBRUARY 2006 NUMBER 419



## **The Exciter**

The **Exciter** is the monthly newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It is available in both printed and electronic form. The printed version is mailed to members just before each club meeting. The electronic form, in Adobe Acrobat PDF format, is e-mailed about a week earlier.

We solicit both articles and advertising. The deadline for submissions is first Friday of the month or Friday after the monthly meeting. Contact the Editor.

The views contained in the Exciter are those of the individual authors, and are not necessarily the views of the Editor, or the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society.

## **The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society**

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, we incorporated a new RARS, and obtained 501(c)(3) Non-Profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friend-ship through Amateur Radio; to be of public service by providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique; and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining Amateur Radio licenses.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are \$18.00 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay \$5.00 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are \$12.00 per year. Dues for non-licensed Associate members are \$9.00 per year.

Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer, or the RARS web site ([www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org)).

### **EXCITER EDITOR:**



## **OFFICERS**

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RARS Repeaters in Raleigh:  
145.13 (82.5 PL)  
146.64  
224.64 (Temporarily off the air)  
444.525 (82.5 PL)

WEB SITE [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org)



**FRONT COVER:** We welcome Dick W8HYD new President of RARS with Selene KG4RMT as Vice President. We thank Andy NI4S for being President the past two years.

## **RALEIGH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MEETINGS**

**Date:** Every first Tuesday of the Month

**Location:** Forest Hills Baptist

Church, at Dixie Trail and Clark Avenue, in Raleigh

**Time:** 7:30pm. Folks start showing up a bit before 7 to chat, brag and eat donuts.

**VE Testing:** The RARS VEs will accept walk-in testing at the February, May, August and November RARS meetings, at the RARSfest in April, the Cary Swapfest in July and the JARSfest in November, and following RARS license classes. Please bring a photo ID, the original and a copy of your current license, plus any CSCEs you have for credit. Please refer to [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org) for more information.

*The Exciter goes to the printer the first Monday after the general meeting. Electronic mailing is the same week. Printing and mailing may vary.*

**TECHNICAL & TRADERS NET** – Saturday evenings on 146.64 after the 8:00pm RARS net

**RARS DUES**  
You can pay RARS dues online at the RARS website: [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org), or send a check to  
Greg Seamster KE4PAX  
1405 Leanne Ct.  
Raleigh, NC 27606

# Announcements



**NEXT RARS MEETING:**  
**Tuesday, February 7, 2005 7:30 pm**

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND THE RADIO  
AMATEUR, presented by Johnnie Mayfield, WA9SZL



## New Members

We would like to welcome the following new members to RARS. Thank you for considering us for your amateur radio club.

KE4IBB Franco S. Venturi

## NETS

VOIP Hurricane net held Saturday 7:00pm on 440 Carolina linking system. [http://www.carolina440.net/repeaters\\_on\\_link.htm](http://www.carolina440.net/repeaters_on_link.htm)

NC VOIP for North Carolina also held on the 440 Carolina linking system on Sunday 7:00pm.

### NEWS HOUR

For those interested, the most recent 4 editions of the RARS News Hour audio is now available on line at [http://www.wa4bpj.com/Ham\\_Radio/RARS\\_News\\_Hour/RARS\\_News\\_Hour.htm](http://www.wa4bpj.com/Ham_Radio/RARS_News_Hour/RARS_News_Hour.htm) Each week, I'll post the current news hour file and keep the most recent four. Each file is about 8 MB and the playing time is approximately 45minutes. 73, Mike, WA4BPJ

### RARS DINNER

Come join us on the **2nd** Tuesday of each month. We are currently meeting at the Golden Corral, 6129 Glenwood Avenue. People start arriving around 6:30pm., and things usually wind down by 8pm or so. You can come whenever it's convenient for you. This gathering is open to anyone, RARS and non-RARS members, adults and children alike. Hope to see you there.

### HAMFEST CALENDAR

February 19	Richmond, VA Frostfest
February 25	Elkin, NC
March 11-12	Charlotte, NC
April 2	Kinston, NC
April 15	Morganton, NC
<b>April 23</b>	<b>RALEIGH, NC</b>
May 13*	Eden, NC
May 20	Williamston, NC
May 19-21	Dayton, OH
May 20	Greenville, NC
<b>May 27*</b>	<b>Durham, NC</b>
June 10*	Winston-Salem
<b>June 24-25</b>	<b>FIELD DAY</b>
July 1	Salisbury, NC
<b>July 15</b>	<b>Cary, NC</b>

Courtesy of the SERA Repeater Journal  
\*Date is not confirmed



# WHERE IN THE WORLD IS NORTH?

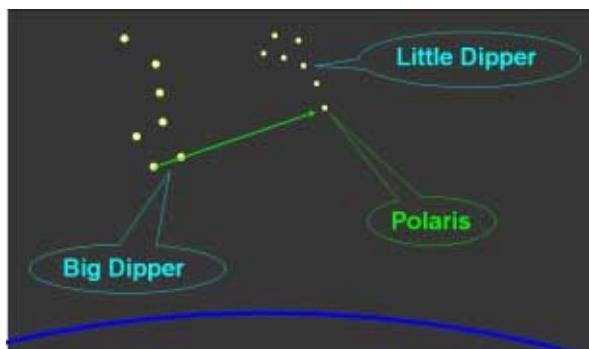
by

Mike Murphy WA4BPJ

Hams with directional antennas want to know where true north is from their location. Rotors and beams need to be aligned and you might want to erect a directional but stationary antenna pointed at Europe or a rare DXpedition. The heading for your antenna, in degrees, is with respect to true north or the northern end of the earth's rotational axis. But which way is north? What follows are three ways to find north so you can be sure your antenna is aimed squarely at the target.

A compass needle points to magnetic north which is generally not the same direction as true north. The difference between magnetic north and true north is called magnetic declination. Its exact value varies with location and time. In the Raleigh area, a compass will point about 8 degrees to the west of true north. If you want to know more, there are several good websites you can visit. To learn more about magnetic declination try <http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/seg/geomag/jsp/struts/calcDeclination>. There is also a declination calculator at <http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/seg/geomag/jsp/struts/calc> that takes your zip code and returns the correct magnetic declination. When using a compass, keep it away from steel or other magnetic objects. Remember that true north will be 8 degrees east of where the compass is pointing.

Polaris, the north star, lies very close to the northern projection of the earth's rotational axis. As the earth rotates, a time lapse photo of the night sky shows the stars making concentric circular trails in the sky. In the northern hemisphere Polaris is very close to the exact center of star rotation (within a degree) so throughout the night it appears stationary in the sky. The spot on the horizon directly below Polaris is the direction of true north. For our location, Polaris will be about 35 degrees above the horizon. It's at the end of the handle of the Little Dipper. The pair of stars at the end of the big dipper's cup lie on a line that points to Polaris.

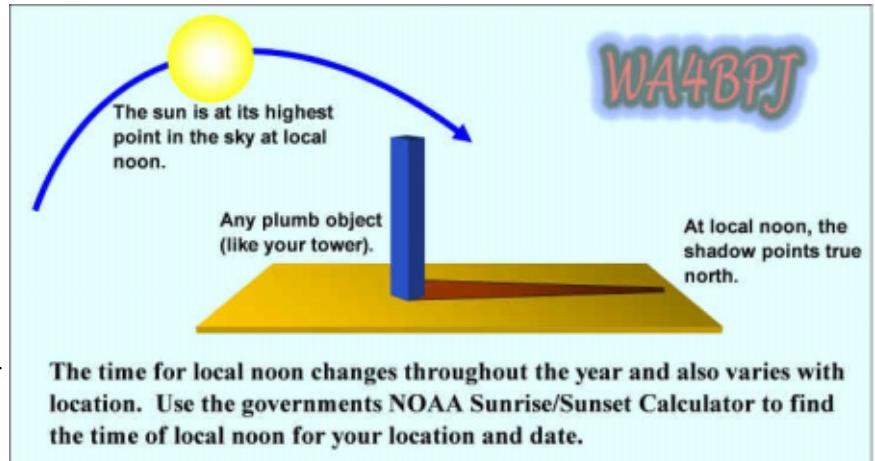


The shadow cast by any plumb (perpendicular to the earth's surface) object will point to true north at local or solar noon. Solar noon is the time when the sun is at its maximum elevation in the sky and is the time half way between local sunrise and sunset. It also varies with location and time of year. Local sunrise and sunset times are usually included with the daily weather information in newspapers. It's also readily available on the web. One such site is <http://www.srb.noaa.gov/highlights/sunrise/sunrise.html>.

The WRAL weather page also carries sunrise and sunset times.

How accurately does a directional antenna need to be pointed? Depending on construction and height above ground, a typical 3 element HF yagi can have a 3db beam width in the range of 60 to 90 degrees. At the other end of the scale, a long boom UHF yagi with 40 elements or more might have a beam width approaching 15 degrees. Most rotors pointing accuracy is no better than about 5 degrees.

The HF yagi might be off course 20 degrees or more before you begin to hear a difference. The same error for the UHF long boom antenna could easily put a weak to moderate signal completely below the noise. To the question of how much time and effort to invest in achieving pointing accuracy, only you can be the judge of the point of diminishing returns for your system.



You can find a summary of finding north on my website at  
[http://www.wa4bpj.com/Ham\\_Radio/Ham\\_Radio\\_Tech\\_Info/true\\_north.htm](http://www.wa4bpj.com/Ham_Radio/Ham_Radio_Tech_Info/true_north.htm)

# LOOKing Back 30 Years

From the February 1976 Exciter

FCC deregulation - 1 year experience no longer necessary for Amateur Extra Class. 500 repeater license applications on backlog, 400,000 CB license applications backlog for Dec 1995.

Bert Bailey, W4FMN, reported a successful activity of handling Christmas messages for the public at the Crabtree Mall the week before Christmas. A total of 257 messages were handled.



# LOOKing Back 10 Years

From the February 1996 Exciter

February RARS meeting had 85 members. The 146.64 repeater was revived!

A new Ham Information Net started at 8:30pm in the place of the Technical Net on 146.64 repeater. This net is conducted once or twice a year, and aimed at providing new hams with information to add to their enjoyment of the hobby, and to help make them comfortable operators.



## Marriage

Martin KI4CFS and Barbara KI4GMU were married on September 30, 2005



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Danny	KD4RAA	02/02
Maury	WW4MC	02/02
Sue	W2GHK	02/02
Selene	KG4RMT	02/03
Lillian	KC4AYH	02/04
Mort	W4MJN	02/05
Bill	W1REP	02/05
Art	W2JNW	02/06
Larry	N4LEW	02/07
Marty	KA1LXG	02/08
Carl	KU4HM	02/09
Harriette	KF4SER	02/10
Buddy	KD4PCD	02/10
Bob	AG4OP	2/13
Dennis	K4DAM	02/13
Mike	K1MW	02/14
John	KG4SWI	02/15
Dick	WW4NC	02/16
Keith	N4QQH	02/16
Don	NJ2E	02/18
Rex	KI4GNA	02/18
Howard	K3EPN	02/19
Mike	AF4WY	02/19
John	KB4IP	02/21
Herb	KG4AWE	02/23
Joseph	W4TTO	02/21
Bob	WX4MMM	02/26
Tom	WA4OTA	02/27
Hans	W2UF	02/27
Mary	KG4OQA	02/28

## NET REPORTS FOR December 2005

8:00pm DAILY: RARS Evening Net  
RARS 2 Meter Traffic/Ragchew net:

Checkins: 343  
Traffic: 31/30  
Minutes: 709  
Sessions: 31

Special Interest Nets:  
Checkins: 55  
Minutes: 390  
Sessions: 8

## A Brief Introduction to the NC VOIP Net

### Leonard Burton N9URK

#### Personal History

Many hams are able to vividly remember what it was that brought them to the hobby. For some it was being able to talk with friends long distances away and for others it was being able to meet new friends both close to home and far away. Others joined the hobby to be able to help with disaster response. I became an amateur radio operator mainly because of a couple linked repeater systems that had coverage in the town I grew up in.

In 1990 the cellular telephone system was in its infancy. I remember riding my bike by the cellular telephone tower about one mile from where I lived and thinking of how mystical and magical it was that a person driving in his or her car could pick up a telephone like device and make a phone call to another part of the world. I would sit and ponder on how phone calls would be routed, even though I had no real understanding of how it actually happened. I could almost feel relays flipping, but as I would later find out there were no relays, it was all digital.

In 1991 I heard about the WA8VZY linked repeater system in Indiana and how I could be in Seymour, IN and talk to operators all over the state with a 5 watt hand held. I remember how excited I became when someone explained how it worked. It may not have been magic but to my fourteen year old mind it sure was. The thought of beaming my voice from a radio to a tower in town and then beaming it to a central point where it was beamed to points all over Indiana was fascinating to a young inquisitive mind like mine.

In 1993 I earned my driver's license and my Amateur Radio License. After my license had came in the mail I made a mad rush to Radio Shack to get my very first rig. It was my faithful HTX-202 which served me until 2004. I remember sitting in the parking lot of my high school talking with Amateurs in Indianapolis and other parts of the state and feeling how great this was that I was the only kid in the high school parking lot with the capability of communicating with others one hundred or more miles away. Anyone else in my high school with communication capabilities in their car were Citizen's Band operators. Needless to say, I was a little high on myself and what I had accomplished by getting my Amateur Radio License and using a linked repeater system.

Linked repeaters have been in my blood ever

since. I find the technology that links repeaters to be extremely fascinating. In 2005 linked repeaters are now common. In the last few years I have not found them as fascinating as I did in 1993 but the VOIP linking protocols has rejuvenated my interest and brought the spark back.

Fast forward to 2005 you will find me using Echolink for the first time. I was amazed that on my first night I was able to talk to a station in England and another in Australia at the same time. I would be hard pressed to convey my enjoyment of being able to point and click and connect to a repeater almost anywhere in the world. Even though many will say that there is no accomplishment when you make a connection on Echolink or IRLP, I beg to differ. An international contact is still an international contact. Using twenty-five watts on HF to talk with a station in Europe is more fascinating than using Echolink or IRLP but it is like fishing. Low power international contacts on HF may be amazing, but that is because they are rare. Amateurs utilizing the Internet to connect repeaters in different parts of the world is just as fascinating when one realizes the stability of the Internet and the amount of work put into being able to have world-wide communication. It is even more fascinating when one realizes the work put into Echolink and IRLP to create a stable platform for use on the Internet.

After the initial thrill of using a "new" method of making intercontinental contacts by Echolink I began to realize that there was no real backbone for Echolink communication in North Carolina. Even though being able to make international contacts regularly is a great benefit of using Echolink or IRLP it is not nearly as important as being able to reliably talk with someone either across town or across the state. Sure, there was the \*LINUX\* Echolink conference server and other places where operators from North Carolina were able to gather if some need arose but there were no places identifying themselves as a place for North Carolinians. The more I used Echolink the more it became my mission to try and start a conference server and regular net with a set of procedures in place where North Carolinians could gather to either chit chat or pass emergency traffic.

## **Emergency uses of Echolink**

The more I used Echolink the more I heard others say that it nor IRLP would serve any purpose during emergencies as the Internet goes down during emergencies – a well meaning but incorrect assessment. The noble philosophy of Amateur Radio has been that we are available if and when the commercial communications networks go down. This very philosophy has fostered a spirit of mistrust of commercial communications networks within the hobby which immediately spills over into Echolink and IRLP. It is my hope that this underlying philosophy will not stifle advances coming to the hobby over the next few years. Over the next several paragraphs we will look at some of the challenges that hinder Amateur emergency communication.

The facts of the matter are that Amateur Radio networks are typically concentrated through one or two central points. During a net the central points are the repeater and the net control station. If either point experiences a problem then communications for a region are disrupted until the backup procedures are implemented. If the net control station goes out most likely another station will take over within a few moments, with very little interruption. If the repeater goes down it is likely that the net will move to another repeater. If another repeater is not available then the net will go to a simplex frequency, thereby potentially limiting the range of communications. A repeater going down can seriously hamper communications in an area. These scenarios are unavoidable during an emergency but are less likely with the implementation of VOIP communication.

Amateur Operators are trained to be able to move nets to simplex frequencies with any station able to act as a relay point for a distant station. The fact that any station can then act as a “manual” repeater makes simplex very reliable. Few groups of radio operators other than Amateurs are able to operate such nets with any efficiency as they lack the skills of trained Amateur Operators.

Even though operation on simplex is very reliable it is limited to a fairly short range. Not many stations are able to erect large antennas and those that can have no way of guaranteeing service during and after severe weather such as tornadoes or hurricanes.

Eastern North Carolina has a nice repeater linking system called the Carolina 440 Linking System that links all points between Wilmington, NC and Raleigh, NC (a distance of ca. 150 miles). It is unlikely, but possible, that one of the towers could come down or the backup generators could run out of fuel thereby disrupting Amateur Communication for either a few minutes

or a few hours.

By its very nature platforms such as Echolink and IRLP are redundant. Implementing redundant backbone paths on a linked repeater system is very possible but can be very expensive. Setting up multiple Echolink and IRLP nodes in a given area is inexpensive as Echolink and IRLP require only a small amount of bandwidth and very few Internet users use their full bandwidth quotas. A VOIP node can be installed either in someone's home or in someone's business and incur no excess bandwidth charges in just about every case where such locations have broad band Internet access. Echolink only uses 17 Kb/s which shows how little bandwidth it needs.

It is a common misnomer that the Internet can “go down”. Many users of the Internet do not realize that the Internet is one of the most redundant communications networks created. It is possible that one of the fiber optic cables can knock out the Internet service provided to a particular Internet Service Provider but the Internet was designed in a manner where other service providers in a town will still have access to the Internet. For instance in the Wilmington, NC area there are at least four providers of high speed Internet service: Time-Warner (Cable co.), Charter (Cable co.), Bell South (telephone co.), and Direcway (satellite service). There are other businesses and organizations that have T-1 or greater lines like the University of North Carolina Wilmington. If all of the Internet service providers here in Wilmington were to go down then the Internet can be accessed by Direcway. Direcway is a two-way satellite based Internet service provider which is insusceptible to local conditions.

A good VOIP setup in an area would have several nodes with different Internet Service Providers. Since the radios connected to these nodes can change frequency then any local repeater can become a means for connecting to the outside world. If the repeater were to go down then operators are able to access the node on a simplex frequency. Another benefit of having several VOIP nodes in an area is that if the local repeaters go down in some rare instance the remaining VOIP nodes can be tied together through a conference server and used as a repeater.

### **Advantages of having connection to outside world**

Now we will look at how VOIP platforms such as Echolink and IRLP can be used for more valuable purposes than passing routine health and welfare traffic. The traditional mode of local Amateur Communication is either 2 meter FM or 440 FM. The traditional mode of regional/national Amateur Communication is HF.

*(Continued on page 9)*

## The Numbers Keep Going Up

By Joe – W4TTO

Although not completely amateur radio related to some but directly related to others, let's discuss the subject of storing data (information). Many of us use our home computers to store large amounts of radio related information. Items such as QSO logs, frequency charts, band plans, satellite information, repeater frequencies, Net schedules, contest information, hamfest schedules, etc. In fact, some folks store massive amounts of data on their PC's. It sure beats hand writing notebook after notebook of information. Anyway, very often most of us lose sight on how far we've come in the area of storage capacities.

In the dawn of disk storage capacities, first came the "kilobyte". For example, a "2K" storage capacity meant you could store up to 2,000 bytes (characters for the most part) of information. Shortly after the kilobyte came the "megabyte" for millions of bytes. In today's PC's, we talk about "gigabytes" or billions of bytes of data. In many modern data centers and soon to be at your desktop in the not too distant

future is the "terabyte" for trillions of bytes of information. A terabyte is a "1" followed by 12 zeros.

To put just one terabyte in perspective, if you were to string out a trillion characters of data in one long line using a standard font size (12 characters per inch), that string of characters would circle the earth 56 times. That's right, it would be 1.4 million miles long. To look at it another way, it would go from the earth to the moon and back 3 times. Now, if for some reason someone wanted to print a trillion characters on paper, it would require 42,500 trees to be cut down and converted into the amount of paper needed to do that. And that's just one terabyte. It boggles the mind. Imagine what the storage capacities will be in the future. After the terabyte, next will come the petabyte (quadrillion), exabyte (quintillion), zettabyte (sextillion), and so on. And it goes on and on and on.

Anyone know what a Googol is?

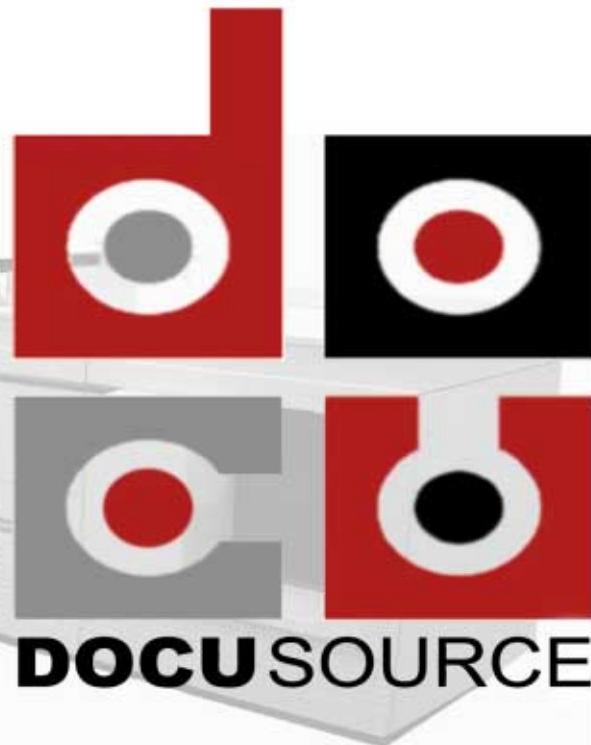
73 - Joe

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Centrally located in the heart of the Triangle!



relax; **docu**source it.

(Continued from page 7) NC VOIP NET

HF is an invaluable mode where traffic can be passed across the country with possibly only one or two intermediaries. By the very design of HF and VHF communications an HF operator several hundred miles away can only participate by passing traffic. Operators on Echolink or IRLP are able to participate just as any local station. He or she can perform net control activities, especially when there are only few operators in an area.

Since net control can be performed by operators outside of the area local Amateurs are able to focus on the more immediate aspects of the emergency. Also, a larger number of operators are able to be marshaled for net control duties. Locally it may be difficult to find several operators who are able to commit to continuous net control duties so the net can stay active twenty-four hours a day and this is where outside operators are able to fill in the gaps as net control is now not limited to a small locality, it is limited to the number of trained operators able to access Echolink or IRLP.

It became my goal to help create such a setup where VOIP platforms are able to actively assist in local emergency communications. Echolink and IRLP are able to actively assist now but what is needed are backup conference servers that come on line automatically when the main conference servers go down. Also what is needed is a good information platform where information about the locality can be stored and then reviewed later by net control which has an automatic back up as well. An information system needs to be designed where net control has access to the same level and type of information that a radio operator dispatching police or fire would have.

A good system design would not only contain information about the immediate disaster but would contain geocode information and information from other databases so net control is able to help pass along any other needed information about a particular area. This information system is able to assist during local emergencies even if neither Echolink or IRLP are not being used.

### **Regional Use of VOIP**

Another method for outsourcing net control may be where two or more rural counties can divide net control duties. These counties can link their repeaters via a VOIP protocol and are able to reduce the needed man power for net operation. By extension, an entire region can be linked by a VOIP protocol and net control operators can come from anywhere. A particular locality may only participate during such activities late at night so local operators can rest but at least the capabilities exist

so this may happen. This way one station has to be dedicated to controlling the net overnight but local operators can rest without having to worry about net control operation.

### **VOIP Allows Importation of Skilled Operators During Emergencies**

There are other advantages to having direct communication with the outside world where some expertise is needed. The VOIP Hurricane nets are controlled by a skilled group of operators that have precise procedures in place. This net links any participating station with the National Hurricane Center in Florida. An organization of VOIP operators must be established in North Carolina in order for us to fully benefit from advances in communication from the VOIP platforms. This is the goal of the North Carolina VOIP net.

### **Weekly Net**

At present the net meets each Sunday night at 1900 Eastern Time. Several repeaters from across North Carolina carry each net. Each week a different representative from an organization presents a talk about some relevant topic. The topics have ranged from local activities in ARES/RACES groups, particular VOIP installations, repeaters in North Carolina, to a presentation about the National VOIP Hurricane Nets. The net is carried on the \*NC\* (267117) conference server and the 9509 IRLP reflector. Stations from outside of North Carolina are more than welcome to participate, but are asked to give priority to North Carolina stations by waiting for net control to call out of state stations.

### **Custom Features of \*NC\* Conference Server.**

The \*NC\* conference server is unique in the fact that it and only a few others are controlled through a website. I have written code to allow control ops to log in and make operational changes via a point and click control panel. This increases the security of Echolink by reducing the accidental disclosure of a common control password as each control operator has a different password.

Stations checking into the net are able to go to the homepage [www.ncvoip.org](http://www.ncvoip.org) and check-in automatically. Automatic conserves net time as seventy percent of stations have a nearby computer.

*(Continued from page 9) NC VOIP NET)*

Since these stations do not take up valuable time needed for checking in emergency, low-power, and mobile stations. A better net management system is in the works so there is no pen and paper needed to control the net.

When a station connected directly to the \*NC\* conference server transmits, a logged in user of the website is able to see a map of where the transmitting station is. The page will refresh every forty-five seconds so it is like a real-time view of who is talking. Once the improvements to the net management system are complete this page will show net control any reports given by the station during the net so net control has immediate access to all pertinent information without having to flip through several pages .

### **Conclusion**

I would like to extend an invitation to anyone interested in our project to check-in to our net or come by the conference server for some friendly talk. Feel free to come by to say hi or to discuss the use of VOIP platforms by Amateur Radio Operators or to discuss whatever you may like. It is only through the use of these technologies will they improve. It is only through the input of others will better ideas be implemented that will make our great hobby more enjoyable. The conference server control operators may be contacted at [contact@ncvoip.org](mailto:contact@ncvoip.org).

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### **WHO'S TO BLAME?**

Selene KG4RMT

Hamfest season is starting. Attendance has declined slowly but surely over the last several years. You can blame the Internet auction sites, the weather, the cost of gasoline, or the state of the economy, but the responsibility has to rest with amateur radio operators themselves. When organizations plan hamfests, attendance figures are the first statistics that come up in the conversation. When dealers are asked to participate, the first question after date and day is "What's the attendance?" The only people who can change the attendance totals are those in the ham community.

Hamfests are much more than opportunities to buy or sell new and used gear. The ham community is a family unto itself. No one else understands the talk, habits and idiosyncrasies better than other hams. Hamfests are gatherings where you can put a face to a voice. The variety of items at hamfest flea markets can rival those in a general store. There's always food and information, and often contests, prizes, and freebies. There is no better way to keep our hobby alive than to support the events whose purpose is to provide all of these things. How could any self-respecting ham pass up the opportunities that abound to attend such events?

So the next time you hear of a hamfest coming up, do your best to clear your calendar, set aside the price of admission, and join your ham brothers and sisters in celebrating a hobby that has so much to offer to those lucky enough to be a part of it. Otherwise, hamfests will disappear and we'll only have ourselves to blame.



## Minutes of the RARS General Meeting for January 2006

The general meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was conducted on January 3, 2006 at the Forest Hills Baptist Church located on Dixie Trail.

President Dick Bitner, W8HYD, called the meeting to order at 7:38 pm.

The following visitors were recognized and welcomed to the meeting: Franco Venturi KE4IBB, Maxine Gilvey, Robert Egler KI4MMT.

Virginia Enzor, NC4VA, thanked all of the Skywarn Spotters for their service during the 2005 weather year. She then announced that this evening's Skywarn Net would feature Jeff Orrock discussing the worst winter storms across North Carolina. Future nets will include the January 17 discussion of the anniversary of the crippling January 19 snowstorm of 2005, the January 24 question and answer session with Greg Fishel and the January 31 net with Janice Jones who will report on the recent hurricane conference that she attended.

Andy Peterson, NI4S, advised there was still time to submit your entries for the 2005 RARS HF Challenge. The deadline is February 15. Contact Andy for complete rules and entry forms.

Steve Jenkins, KA8HXX, reported that Powell Elementary School will be participating in the 2006 School Club Roundup. This event will occur on the second full week of February and Powell will be participating each school day. All are invited to visit the school station and help the students operate the event. Those who cannot attend are encouraged to get on the radio from home and make contacts. Steve also asked for donations to assist the students in preparing QSL cards and pay for postage. Those wishing to make a tax deductible contribution may do so through RARS. Contact RARS Treasurer, Greg Seamster KE4PAX, for all the details.

Joe Squashic, W4TTQ, presented Pete Ellis, KI4LWQ, with a certificate recognizing his completion of the NTS traffic training program.

Greg Seamster, KE4PAX, provided the Treasurer's report. There are currently 259 RARS members. There has

been a recent donation of equipment to RARS. Details on the equipment and availability to members will be forthcoming.

Selene Montgomery, KG4RMT, reminded members that the RARS monthly dinner will be held next Tuesday at the Golden Corral located on Glenwood Avenue. Gathering time begins at 6:30 pm and everyone is invited to attend.

Selene then introduced Bob Conder, K4RLC, for the evening's program. Bob provided a fascinating discussion and presentation of his experiences working with the hurricane Katrina relief effort in the Gulf coast.

Door prizes were won by Pete Ellis, KI4LWQ and Rod Thomson, KI4LSN.

Attendance - TBD

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Dick Orander, KD4ISC

RARS Secretary

## RARS HF Challenge -- Final Call!

Andy NI4S

Despite a less than stellar effort by the Challenge Master <ahem> to publicize the event, a few scores have made their way in for the first running of the RARS HF Challenge!

If you're saying "hey, what's that," you're probably not alone. The HF Challenge was designed as a fun, friendly competition among club members to work different US states, Canadian provinces, DXCC entities and NC counties. Each of those worked counts for 1 point (regardless of how many times you work it).

We have a Big Gun category (> 150W), a Little Pistol category (<= 150W), and a Limited category (single band, all-CW, QRP, etc.) There's also an all-ragchew category for those who like to chat rather than "contest."

For all the details, head to [www.rars.org/hf\\_challenge](http://www.rars.org/hf_challenge) and grab a copy of the rules and a tally sheet.

As of the January meeting, there's 1 entry to beat in the Big Gun category, 2 Little Pistols.. and the first entry I get will sit atop the Limited category. Some enterprising entrant might realize that submitting a log containing a single QSO on a single band would technically qualify and be the new winning entry!

So let's see those entries! Just send me a total of the # of DXCC, states/provinces, and NC counties you worked between April 5, 2005 and January 1, 2006 at Noon, and your category. Tally sheets with logged QSOs may be required of the top entrants. You can bring them to the February meeting or e-mail ni4s at earthlink dot net.

And hey, any QSOs made after noon on January 1 count for the 2006 running of the Challenge! 73 es GL!

## HAM COLLECTION

Martin KI4CFS



First ham shack setup of Martin KI4CFS.



German ham stamp: ham radio stamp I found on ebay



Japan ham stamp: ham radio stamp I found on ebay



Radio: my Grandfathers radio receiver

Westernunionlearner3 : Morris code toy that is about 40 years old, still works with D cell battery. It has instruction manual





# MEET THE MEMBERS

Name: Gary Pearce  
Callsign: KN4AQ (originally WA9NSO)  
Residence: Waterfall Ct., Cary, NC

When and why did you become a ham? 1965, at age 15. Who knows why? My first two-way radio was a Knight Kit C-100 walkie-talkie, and I progressed from there.

Equipment owned: Home: Icom 753ProIII for HF, Yaesu 8900 for VHF/UHF, Icom 38A 220 MHz. Mobile: Icom 706MKIIG HF, Yaesu 8900 VHF/UHF, Icom 38A 220 MHz. Belt: Kenwood TH-F6, Icom T-90. Shelf: more hand-helds than I can count, and a few scanners.

Other hobbies: Like there's time for other hobbies! Cyndi KD4ACW and I travel some each year (Hawaii's our favorite). I keep threatening to get another motorcycle. Computers started as hobby but now they're just work.

Work: Freelance audio engineer and video editor. I make mostly commercials (hey! Knock it off with the TiVO fast forward!), marketing and training programs. I've done a little on-air broadcast radio, and for the past year I've been the announcer voice heard on Travelocity radio and TV commercials (what did I tell you about that TiVO?!).

I've been RARS PIO since moving to town in 1990, and put in a couple years as President and Exciter editor. I'm currently the club FM/Repeater Chairman. And I've been the SERA Repeater Journal editor for three years, but I'm about to hang that up - not enough time. In a previous lifetime I was President of the Chicago FM Club and frequency coordinator for Chicago/northern Illinois.

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## HF Challenge



Chuck Littlewood K4HF is working the RARS HF CHALLENGE and the ARRL 2006 SKN CW QSO Party.